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HS2's impact on urban homes and hedgehogs

Letters

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Patrick Barkham's article about the HS2 route through the countryside ([The long read, 17 November](#)) was excellent – a compelling overview of its effect on rural communities. But, though any article about the omnishambles that is HS2 is welcome, it was incomplete. Perhaps Patrick could also now wander around Camden to see and record the devastation that HS2 will bring to urban residents: 24/7 working with all the associated noise and pollution that goes with such work through a conservation area; fragile houses – part of John Nash's scheme for Regent's Park – being drilled under for the purpose of installation of concrete staves; roads closed for years; tower blocks destroyed; Drummond

Street (known for its Asian restaurants) destroyed; London Zoo car park taken over by HS2's HGVs, which threatens the endangered hedgehog community.

Small local businesses will be jeopardised due to noise and lack of access, and there will be no compensation in any form for those living within the M25. An article on HS2's effects on Camden would surely be an equally depressing but irresistible read.

Lorely Burkill

London

- By starting his walk over the [HS2](#) route at West Ruislip, Patrick Barkham missed perhaps the most foolish thing about the whole project: its failure to link up directly with HS1. Instead of providing a seamless link to Europe, at best travellers from the north and Midlands who wish to go on to cross the Channel will be faced with a difficult change involving dragging their baggage along the Euston Road to the HS1 terminus at St Pancras. Joined-up thinking? This government can't even do joined-up travel!

Dr Richard Carter

London

- Patrick Barkham's heartbreaking account of the onrushing HS2 reminded me of the time four years ago when I went to express my anger at the scheme to local [MP John Howell](#), quite possibly the most arrogant man I have ever met, who sneered: "Why are you so bothered? It isn't going through Thame." In fact, the residual effects will be as catastrophic as the railway. Apart from the line and the inevitable rape of the environment, the influx of construction traffic will blight all surrounding areas by the wayside for years to come. There are already sinister little signs on the roads around Princes Risborough warning of just this. Once the monster trucks start rolling through the Chilterns, it will be interesting to see how many HS2 apologists change their minds. Mass protest aside, I suggest that voters affected by HS2 do their utmost to remove from office every single MP - mostly Conservative - whose constituencies fall along the route, and replace them with anti-HS2 independents.

Max Bell

Thame, Oxfordshire

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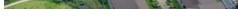
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